

Disposition of Remains Report Podgorica Montenegro

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State Department Country Specific Information

<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel/International-Travel-Country-Information-Pages/Montenegro.html>

Register With the U.S. Embassy/Smart Travel Enrollment Program

<https://step.state.gov/step/>

Country Profile:

The U.S. government estimates the population at 645,000 (July 2016 estimate). According to the 2011 census, approximately 72 percent of the population is Orthodox, either SOC or MOC. Local media estimate the SOC accounts for approximately 70 percent of the Orthodox population, while the MOC makes up the remaining 30 percent. The census also reports 19.1 percent of the population is Muslim, 3.4 percent is Roman Catholic, and 1.2 percent is atheist. According to press estimates, the Jewish community numbers approximately 350.

There is a strong correlation between ethnicity and religion: ethnic Montenegrins and ethnic Serbs are generally associated with the MOC and the SOC respectively, ethnic Albanians with Islam or Catholicism, and ethnic Croats with the Catholic Church. Many

Bosniaks (ethnic Bosnians who are Muslim) and other Muslims live along the eastern and northern borders with Albania, Kosovo, and Serbia.

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(1) Maximum period Before Burial of Remains

In Montenegro, burial may not take place until 24 hours after death, but must take place within 72 hours. In some cases, however, this period may be extended, particularly if the body is refrigerated. Refrigeration facilities are rare, and embalming, not being a Montenegrin custom, is only performed in Podgorica. If a body, whether embalmed or not, is placed within a sealed metal container built to certain specifications, it may be stored above ground for an extended period if refrigerated.

(2) Embalming

Embalming is only available in the Clinical Center of Montenegro, located in Podgorica. Embalming should be done within 72 hours of death.

It is important to know that embalming is rarely performed in Montenegro. Anyone selecting embalming may be disappointed or dissatisfied with the results, as the service does not meet the U.S. standards.

(3) Cremation

Unfortunately, cremation is not available in Montenegro. It can, however, be arranged to be performed in Serbia or Croatia. The wait time, transportation costs and paper work for transporting a body to a foreign country can make this process very long. Cremation facilities in Serbia exist only in Belgrade and Novi Sad. Legal provisions are the same as for burials, except that the written permission of the next-of-kin or other authorized persons (including consular officers) is necessary. Fees of about \$1,400 include the collection and transportation of cremated remains, coffin, urn, crematorium fee, administrative fees, and shipment. The fee does not include transportation to the facility.

(4) Caskets and Containers;

Caskets and Containers can be bought in funeral homes. The quality and price vary by location, from \$150 to \$1,400 U.S. Dollars. Podgorica and Bar have the largest number of funeral homes and thus greatest selection.

When remains are to be transported out of the country, the body is appropriately prepared or cremated for shipment. It is then placed in a sealed coffin with a metal container.

In the case of cremation, the remains are placed in an urn inside of a wooden crate. Caskets and urns are available locally on short notice. Remains are prepared according to international regulations and meet the requirements for shipment out of the country.

(5) Exportation of Human Remains;

When remains are to be transported out of the country, the body is appropriately prepared or cremated for shipment. It is then placed in a sealed coffin with a metal container. For cremation, the remains are placed in an urn inside a sturdy wooden crate. Caskets and urns are available locally on short notice. Remains are prepared according to international regulations and meet the requirements for shipment out of the country. In lots of cases remains can be shipped to the nearest international airport in the region which is usually Dubrovnik, Tirana, or Belgrade. Exportation of human remains to the U.S. can cost up to \$10,000 U.S. dollars. The price can vary depending on the departure city and final destination in U.S. The Montenegrin funeral home or undertaker must prepare the remains as required for air transportation.

Procedures and documents for the exportation of human remains are as follows.

Set of Documents which accompany the HUM or the urn:

1. Death certificate issued by Montenegrin Ministry of Internal Affairs (Issued in international form which does not require official translation in English)
2. Copy of the deceased's passport
3. Consular Mortuary Certificate
4. Embalming certificate or Cremation certificate
5. Approval for transportation of HUM issued by the Montenegrin Ministry of Health's Sanitation Inspector (Sprovodnica i odobrenje za prenos umrlog lica)
6. Letter from a Consular officer to Montenegrin Customs, Border Police unit and airport officials with general information and the final destination of HUM.

7. Letter from a Consular officer to customs and airport officials (in English) in transiting countries with Consular contact information and information on the final destination.

(6) Costs: Note that the cost of service may vary, and that the exchange rate may vary between U.S. dollar and euro;

(7) Exhumation and Shipment

Exhumation is permitted upon the presentation of a permit from the Ministry of Health's Sanitation Inspectorate. Exhumation often is not allowed during summer months. Costs vary depending upon charges for local labor.

(8) Local Customs Regarding Funerals, Disposition of Remains, Mourning, Memorial Services.

Montenegrin funeral includes a viewing and a funeral ceremony with a burial in a family grave, and periodic memorial services. At the viewing, the family members and relatives receive condolences. The funeral is usually on the day of the viewing or shortly after.